Even the Tamil Nadu farmers suffered last year because of non-availability of urea for the kuruvai season. The then Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi, had to take steps on a war footing to distribute the available urea to save the farmers and also to increase the yield. Then she had also taken up the matter with the Centre to import urea in time and not to discriminate against Tamil Nadu while distributing urea and other fertilisers.

Madam, the Centre should not sit pretty because the situation is very grave both for the farmers and workers. Therefore, on behalf of the All-India Anna DMK Party I urge upon the Centre to allocate the necessary funds for reviving all the sick fertiliser public undertakings without delay and revive them. Such a step will, besides boosting agricultural production, also save precious foreign exchange that the Government is spending for the import of fertilisers. This will further encourage our workers who, despite their hard work, are apprehensive of losing their jobs. I hope the hon. Minister, who is present here, will assure this House to this effect. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Hon. Members the Minister of Finance is here in the House and he would like to reply to the debate on Jammu and Kashmir. I think we should allow him to give the reply.

SHRI SOLIPETA RAMACHANDRA REDDY (Andhra Pradesh): What about this topic, Madam?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): After this. He will take only five minutes.

THE BUDGET (JAMMU AND KASHMIR), 1996-97

AND

THE JAMMU AND KASHMIR APPROPRIATION (NO. 2) BILL, 1996—CONT'D

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE AND MINISTER OF COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Madam Vice-Chairperson, I apologise to hon. Members for not being present here when the discussion on Jammu and Kashmir took place. I was here when the first hon. Member started, but I had to go to the Lok Sabha because of two other finance Bills there. I share the concern of hon. Members for Jammu and Kashmir, but we all know that there are special reasons why that State suffered greatly, and I sincerely hope that the elections that are under way will mark a watershed and a new beginning for that State.

I do not claim any special credit for this Government for the decision to hold elections. Such a decision could not have been taken without the willing cooperation and support of all sections of this House and all political parties. We are in office today and, therefore, a decision of this nature had to be formally taken by the Government in office. But the Government readily acknowledges the cooperation received from all sections, all political parties, and the peaceful first phase poll in Jammu and Kashmir stands testimony to the correctness of that decision. I am sure that the conduct of free and fair elections in Jammu and Kashmir and the election of a State Legislature and the installation of a responsible Government in Jammu and Kashmir will send a signal to the whole world about India's commitment to democracy and India's commitment to bring peace in one of India's States and to respond to the aspirations of the people of that State.

Madam, I have very quickly perused the points made by hon. Members. In fact, some points made by Mr. Malkani, I believe, have been replied to by Mr.

Pranab Mukherjee. In a sense it has been a real debate, one Member taking the responsibility of answering to another Member.....*(Interruptions)*

I just want to respond to the point made by Mr. Malkani. I don't think that we should rush to conclusions based on some statistics. Why is the per-capita expendture in Jammu and Kashmir apparently high? It is because the cost of every project in Jammu and Kashmir is much higher than that in other areas. In fact, if we break it down to Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh, we find that the per-capita expenditure is much higher in Ladakh. That is what affects the per-capita expenditure of the whole State. If you look at the per-capita expenditure in the Valley alone, it compares very well with the per capita expenditure in other parts of the country. To lay a road in Ladakh or to take a pipeline in Ladakh it costs several times more than that in planes of Uttar Pradesh or in any other district with normal terrain and normal conditions.

Even if we spend a little more per capita in Jammu and Kashmir, I don't think we should regret that. Every rupee that is spent on development is a reupee saved on fighting terrorism. The more the development, the less there will be the militancy. The more we can bring the people into the main stream and show them the advantages of peaceful development and the democratic system, the less we will have to spend to fight the militancy. We spent a huge amount of money on fighting the militancy in Punjab. Today we are reaping the fruits of that. We are expending much more on development in Punjab today. So, I don't think that we should grudge this expenditure. We are fighting a proxy war in Kashmir. I think the election will be the culmination of that process, by which we will declare to the whole world that the people of Jammu and Kashmir vote to remain within the Indian Union, vote for a representative government and vote for peace and development.

This Budget for Jammu and Kashmir provides a considerable amount of money for its Plan and non-Plan. We are fully providing for the Plan of Jammu and Kashmir. It is about Rs. 1,500 crores. The additional Central support goes to meet the non-Plan expenditure partly. Nevertheless, there is financing gap, and it is in order to meet that financing gap of Rs. 352 crores that the Prime Minister made a special announcement that we would find the resources to meet that financing gap. Given the peculiar situation and the great hardships that the people of that State have undergone, the Central Government is committed to meet the financing gap.

On the development side, much has taken place in the State. For the first time in six years, in 1995-96 there was 100 per cent utilisation of the Plan funds. Non-official public representatives cutting across party lines are participating in the District Development Board meetings. Block-level planning has been introduced in the State last year. The Ladakh Autonomous Hill Council has been constituted with directly elected representatives.

Physical verification of major works given to district-level task forces constituted under the respective District Development Commissioners, was conducted last year. I am told that 1,500 works have been physically inspected, and their photographs and records have been maintained. When an elected government assumes office, it can go through these records and satisfy itself about the work that has been done and can continue the work that is required to be done.

The revamped public distribution system has been extended to all the 57 blocks. Eleven mobile shops have been established for catering to higher and remote parts of the State.

Pre-matric scholarship to students belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes has been increased

from Rs.100/- to Rs. 200/- per male student and from Rs. 125/- to Rs 250/- per female student. The National Social Assistance Programme, the National Family Pension Programme and the National Maternity Assitance Programme were introduced in the State last year. All the blocks are now covered under the National Scheme of Mid-Day Meals. 2.5 lakh children are benefiting under the scheme. A 220 KVA transmission line from Jammu to the Kashmir valley is expected to be commissioned shortly.

So, I think, given the difficult conditions a considerable amount of work has been done, but no Government is as good as a representative Government. No Government can be better than a representative Government. So, we are on the threshold of ushering in a representative Government. I sincerely hope it is the last occasion when we would have to pass the Budget for Jammu and Kashmir. This responsibility rightfully belongs to the people of that State, to the Legislature of that State and I am sure with the cooperation of everyone we will complete the elections and install an elected Government there.

I request the hon. Members to join me and pass the Budget and the Appropriation Bill unanimously.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): The question is: "That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of the State of Jammu and Kashmir for the services of the financial year 1996-97, as passed by Lok Sabha be taken into consideration."

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): We shall now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

Clauses 2 and 3 and the Schedule were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): Madam, I move that the Bill be returned.

The question was put and the motion was adopted.

MESSAGE FROM THE LOK SABHA

The Finance (No. 2) Bill, 1996.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Madam, I have to report to the House the following meassage received from the Lok Sabha signed by the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha.

"In accordance with the provisions of rule 96 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, I am directed to enclose the Finance (No. 2) Bill, 1996, as passed by Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 12th September, 1996.

The Speaker has certified that this Bill is a Money Bill within the meaning of article 110 of the Constitution of India."

Madam, I lay a copy of the Bill on the Table.

SHORT DURATION DISCUSSION

Revival of Sick Public Sector Fertilizer Units Vis-a-vis Huge Import of Urea During the Last Five Years—Contd.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Mr. Muthu Mani, I think you have finished your speech.

SHRI S. MUTHU MANI: Yes, Madam.

SHRI RAGHAVJI (Madhya Pradesh): Madam, when will we have discussion on the Finance Bill?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Tomorrow.

SHRI RAGHAVJI: And when will be the reply?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE): Tomorrow. This is the last item on the Agenda today.